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SUBJECT: TWO FACES OF ZANU-PF

Classified By: Ambassador James D. McGee for reason 1.4 (d)

SUMMARY

¶1. (C) A courtesy call by the Ambassador on Co-Ministers of Home Affairs Giles Mutsekwa (MDC-T) and Kembo Mohadi (ZANU-PF) on April 23 devolved into an anti-U.S. diatribe by Mohadi who walked out of the meeting. This followed remarks by the Ambassador that the U.S. wanted to help Zimbabwe, but non-humanitarian assistance would be dependent on GOZ progress; continuing violent farm invasions were not helpful. Mutsekwa subsequently apologized on behalf of the Ministry and expressed his desire for GOZ-U.S. cooperation. In an earlier -- and pleasant -- meeting with Minister of Tourism and Hospitality Walter Mzembi (ZANU-PF), Mzembi took on board the Ambassador's points, pledged cooperation, and appealed for technical assistance. END SUMMARY.

Mutsekwa-Mohadi Meeting

¶2. (C) Mutsekwa and Mohadi were joined by the Permanent Secretary, two other officials of the Ministry, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) U.S. desk officer. (NOTE: We continue to schedule meetings with MDC ministers directly; if they are accompanied by a permanent secretary or other aide, it is by their choice. With the exception of Mzembi, ZANU-PF ministers are routinely joined by a representative of the MFA. END NOTE.)

¶3. (C) The Ambassador began by stating U.S. desire to help Zimbabwe and its new government. This would require efforts by the government to help itself, particularly in how it is perceived in Washington and elsewhere. He noted that the government had made progress, but the world was seeing violent farm invasions as the face of Zimbabwe. He pointed out that Deputy Prime Minister Arthur Mutambara, accompanied by the two Home Affairs ministers and others, had visited a

farm on Saturday, possession of which was contested by Edna Madzongwe (president of the Senate) and the Etheridge family.

An agreement had been reached for both parties to share possession until the GOZ decided the issue. The Ambassador related that on Monday, as the Etheridges tried to reenter the farm, a confrontation had occurred and police shot three farm workers, one of whom lost part of his leg. Further, one of the Etheridge sons was under arrest. The Ambassador also lamented that Congressional staff member Pearl-Alice Marsh, who recently visited Zimbabwe after receiving a visa at the airport, had been unable to obtain a visa at the Zimbabwean Embassy in Washington.

¶4. (C) Mohadi preempted Mutsekwa, who was about to respond, and began lecturing the Ambassador. Zimbabwe wanted the international community to help it succeed, he said, but not tell it how to succeed. Zimbabwe resented the bullying tendency of the West. He continued that he had left Zimbabwe at a young age to fight in the liberation struggle and had received training in the USSR. His life was devoted to the Qreceived training in the USSR. His life was devoted to the continuing liberation struggle and he had lost his youth fighting the British, U.S. and Australians. (COMMENT: We have no idea where he might have fought Americans or Australians, and did not have an opportunity to ask. END COMMENT.) In 1999, Zimbabwe had embarked on the unfulfilled task of economic independence based on land (a reference to the beginning of farm invasions). Zimbabwe was subsequently subjected to economic strangulation, including ZDERA. Mohadi added that in Zimbabwe, ownership of the land resided in the State; if it was a sin for the State to decide

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the disposition of land, then "let us die."

¶5. (C) Turning to the Etheridge case, Mohadi said he and Mutsekwa had talked with the Commissioner General of Police (Augustine Chihuri). Their understanding was that police had fired in the air. It was unclear if and how injuries had occurred. An investigation was continuing. The U.S. was not there and it was presumptuous of us to assume that police acted illegally.

¶6. (C) On the issue of visas, Mohadi said issuance would be based on reciprocity. If the U.S. was not forthcoming with visas for Zimbabweans, we could expect no assistance in Washington.

¶7. (C) Having said his piece, Mohadi left the room.

¶8. (C) Mutsekwa apologized to the Ambassador on behalf of the Ministry. He said Mohadi had expressed personal feelings which did not represent the government. The policy of the government was to open up and look ahead. He noted that during the negotiations leading to the formation of the government, there had been extremists on both sides (implying this was also true of the current government) and it was necessary to persevere. Since the formation of the government, Mutsekwa emphasized, he and Mohadi had been able to work collaboratively. He reiterated that Mohadi's remarks were "unfortunate" and "uncalled for."

¶9. (C) Mutsekwa concurred with Mohadi that they had called the Commissioner General of Police about the Etheridge situation. The Commissioner General had promised to send an investigative team. Mutsekwa was not aware one of the sons was in detention. He promised to establish the truth.

¶10. (C) Mutsekwa concluded by stating that his ministry did not have a sufficient budget to professionalize, equip, and pay police. He understood that assistance was dependent in part on demonstrating law and order; he pledged to work for this.

Mzembi Meeting

¶11. (C) The Ambassador made essentially the same points with Mzembi as he did with Mutsekwa and Mohadi. In contrast to Mohadi, Mzembi acknowledged that Zimbabwe's "brand" had suffered. He believed that most ZANU-PF ministers recognized the need for change; acknowledging there were hardliners who were resisting change, he proclaimed Mugabe a "change agent." But despite the majority desiring progress, ZANU-PF collectively, Mzembi argued, tended to be retrogressive. All in all, he believed significant change would come.

¶12. (C) As with other ministers, Mzembi said his ministry lacked capacity. He appealed for help.

COMMENT

¶13. (C) Unfortunately, Mohadi is more representative of ZANU-PF in government than Mzembi. This will make progress more difficult. But it is significant that Mzembi has Mugabe's ear, and that there are a significant number of reformers in ZANU-PF. We continue to believe there will be fitful advances; we should not expect too much too soon. END COMMENT.

MC GEE